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The Secret of The Statue

Eleanor C. Donnelly

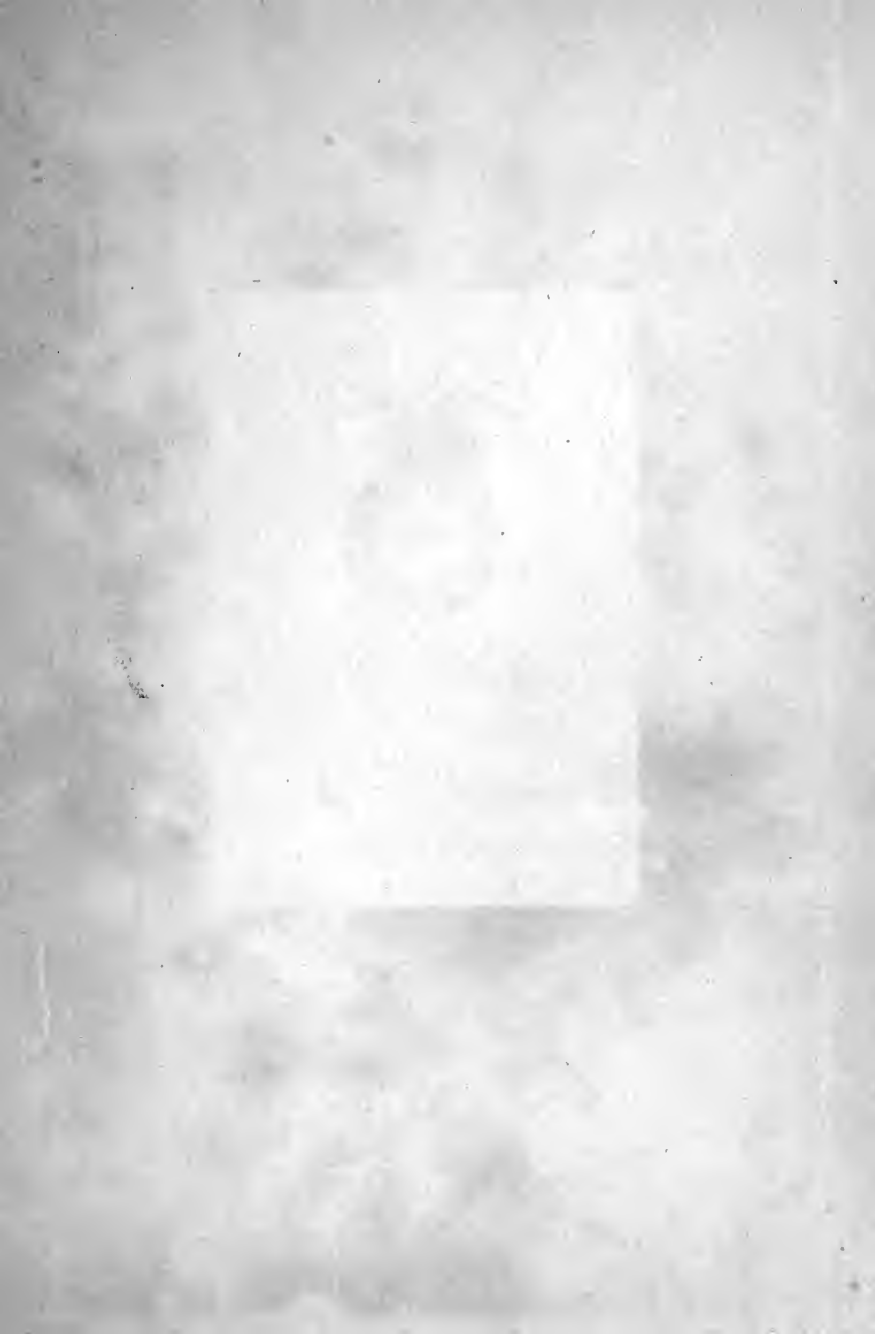


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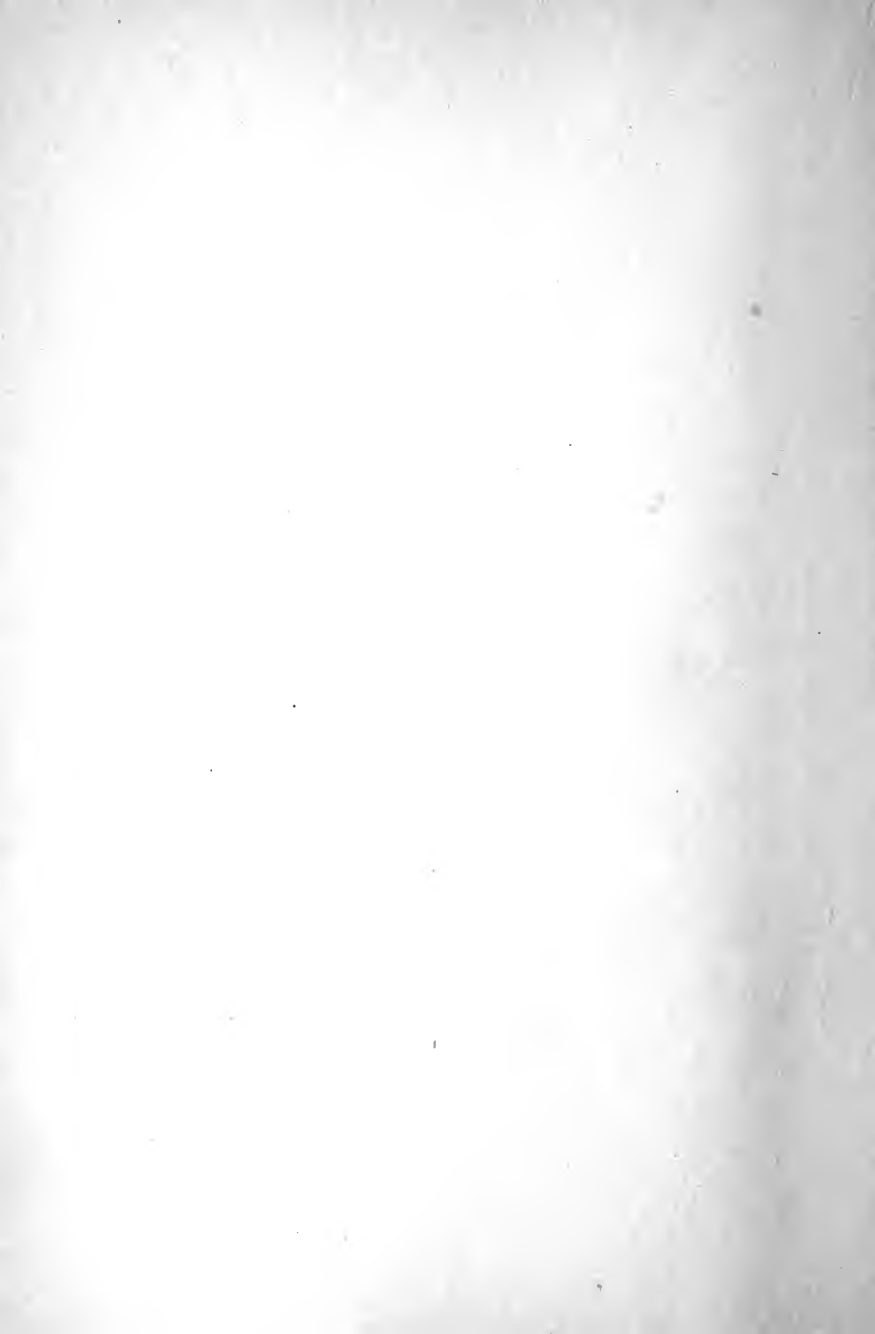
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The Secret of the Statue *and Other Verse*

BY

ELEANOR C. DONNELLY

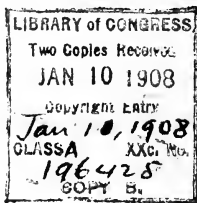
Author of "Poems," "A Tuscan Magdalen,"
"Prince Ragnal," "Rhymes of the Friar
Stephen," "Christian Carols," "Hymns,"
"Blessed Youth," etc., etc., etc.



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NOTE

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TO OUR ILLUSTRIOUS CHIEF EXECUTIVE
HIS EXCELLENCY, PRESIDENT ROOSE-
VELT

They builded well who named thee THEODORE,
The gift of God, for to our age thou art
A gift divine! Single and staunch of heart,
As Chivalry's most valiant knight of yore,
In public life and private, peace or war,
Thou faithful art to principles sublime,
The heritage of heroes gone before
Whom men have made their models to all time.

Be thine the fulness of Right's victory!
Conserver of thy race, great Commoner!
Fame may proclaim thee Fortune's conqueror,
But, in these pages dedicate to thee,
More truly do I hail thee, honored Sir,
Our gift of God, — our peerless THEODORE!



CONTENTS

<i>Dedicatory Sonnet to His Excellency, President Roosevelt</i>	3
<i>The Secret of the Statue</i>	9
<i>Dan Cupid and Death</i>	9
<i>The Obelisk</i>	11
<i>Virgil's Complaint</i>	12
<i>The Choice of Rahbod</i>	14
<i>In Old Tagaste</i>	15
<i>Only one Paradise</i>	16
<i>The Wrestlers</i>	18
<i>The First Ship of the American Navy</i>	18
<i>Delicate Distinctions</i>	20
<i>The King's Skull</i>	21
<i>Deeds, not Words</i>	21
<i>Indissoluble</i>	23
<i>Content</i>	23
<i>The Echo of Life</i>	24
<i>The Bell</i>	25
<i>The Elixir of Youth</i>	25
<i>A Persian Pharisee</i>	26
<i>The Greater Hero</i>	27
<i>Since Mother Died</i>	28
<i>Alas! Poor Poet!</i>	29
<i>The Refiner's Test</i>	29
<i>Legend of Saint Joseph's Staff</i>	30
<i>Responsibility</i>	31
<i>A True Friend</i>	32
<i>Dawn-Voices</i>	33
<i>A Strange Tribunal</i>	33
<i>Moore of the Melodies</i>	35
<i>A Ruined Village</i>	36
<i>The Baby's Prayer</i>	37
<i>Mardi Gras</i>	38
<i>The Loup-Garou</i>	39
<i>The Madonna of the Rose</i>	40

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Love, the Divine</i>	41
<i>The Touchstone</i>	41
<i>Babousheka</i>	42
<i>A Seashell from the Irish Coast</i>	43
<i>After the Garden Party</i>	44
<i>The Doom-Cup</i>	46
<i>A Mosaic of Anachreon</i>	49
<i>Out of the Game</i>	50
<i>The Fatal Yule</i>	51
<i>Legend of Alessandra</i>	53
<i>George Washington</i>	56
<i>At the Bar</i>	56
<i>The Lights of Home</i>	57
<i>A Wise Suggestion</i>	58
<i>At Last</i>	58
<i>The Sphinx of the Sea</i>	59
<i>The Gift from Heaven</i>	60
<i>The Death-Bringers</i>	61
<i>Adversity's Scales</i>	62
<i>The Poet's Plea</i>	63
<i>Alciphron's Lament</i>	64
<i>The Rider of the White Horse</i>	65
<i>Socrates</i>	66
<i>Mosquito Song</i>	66
<i>Flower Miracles</i>	67
<i>Anne Boleyn in the Tower</i>	68
<i>Ingratitude</i>	69
<i>The Things of God</i>	69
<i>Per Dominum Nostrum</i>	70
<i>A Northern May</i>	71
<i>Nothing More</i>	72
<i>A Modern Job</i>	72
<i>The Vestal</i>	73
<i>Lullaby</i>	74

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Drusilla's Answer</i>	75
<i>Jealousy</i>	76
<i>The Sermon of the Flowers</i>	76
<i>Retrospection</i>	78
<i>"Ring out the Old — Ring in the New!"</i>	79



THE SECRET OF THE STATUE

In an old gallery, fame-garlanded,
A fair, mysterious statue once had place,
With long hair shrouding its averted face,
And on each graceful foot, a wing wide spread.
Quoth one: "Young Hermes, this!" "Nay," answered

The sculptor: "This is Opportunity.
Men know him not, too oft, when him they see,
Because of his veil'd face, averted head."

"But why these wings upon his lovely feet?"
"Because," the grave-eyed master made response,
"He cometh ever upon pinions fleet,
To flee as swiftly. He can come but once;
And once departed, unembraced by men,
None can o'ertake or urge him back again."

DAN CUPID AND DEATH

(AFTER ÆSOP)

I

The smiles and the sneers of the sage jointly scorn-
ing,
Blind and deaf all alike to earth's tears or earth's
talk,
Dan Cupid and Death (strange companions!) one
morning
Went strolling abroad for a midsummer walk.

The one was a round, rosy, dimpled young fellow,
Golden-pinion'd, his blue eyes of merriment full;
The other, with scythe and with glass, was a yellow
Old skeleton, crown'd by the crossbones and
skull.

Behold! on each back, an odd quiver discloses
Brave store of keen weapons of curious kind:
The darts of young Cupid were feathered with
roses,
The arrows of Death were with cypress entwin'd.

II

Not a breath was abroad; at high-noon, 'twas so
hot — lo!

The earth fairly smoked with the terrible heat;
Dan Cupid and Death called a halt at a grotto,
And stole in to sleep in that shady retreat.

The while on the grass and dried leaves of their
shelter,
They stretch'd out their length for a slumber
profound,
They loosen'd their quivers, and there, helter-
skelter,
Their arrows were scattered *en masse* on the
ground.

III

Alas! and alas! the siesta was charming:
The coolest of breezes the slumberers fann'd;
When they woke with a start, it was really alarming,
The twilight had fallen, the night was at hand!

Each sprang to his feet, seized his quiver, half
stupid,
And thrust the loose darts in their glittering
sheath;
Alas! and alack! the bright arrows of Cupid
Were mix'd in their haste with the arrows of
Death!

IV

Nevermore since that day do they wander together,
Dan Cupid and Death; yet, whenever are seen
A pair of old lovers in sunshiny weather,
Their love pledges plighting in gardens of green,

The world shakes its head with a cynical pleasure,
And smiles as it murmurs, "'Tis one of Love's
darts
Shot out of Death's quiver. O lovers at leisure!
The Grave, not the Altar, should claim your old
hearts! "

And when some young darling, some fair, fragile
creature
Lies cold on her death-couch, all men with a
groan
Cry, "Love, thou art cruel! O false, foolish
archer,
The arrow of Death hath supplanted thine own!"

THE OBELISK

To his chief architect, the Ptolemy said:
"Build me an obelisk so strong, so high,

So vast in its proportions that the eye
Of e'en the staring Sphinx may view with dread
As falls its shadow on her hooded head.
Grave deep my name upon its granite base,
For I would have men know, tho' I be dead,
Time's ruthless hand can ne'er my fame erase!"

'Twas done. The shaft long tower'd by the Nile,
Till winds and storms its surface-glaze had wreck'd.
Lo! Ptolemy's name had vanished with his past;
For there, cut deep upon the massive pile,
Appear'd the name of the great architect!
Genius, like truth, doth pride and pomp outlast.

VIRGIL'S COMPLAINT

I

"Sic vos non vobis nidificates aves."

Ye little birds, beneath whose feather'd breasts
The tiny eggs repose in covert warm,
Not for yourselves ye build the downy nests
Whereon ye brood in sunshine or in storm.
Not for yourselves, but for those errant thieves
Who come to rob you with false flatt'ring words,
Snaring your young: 'til even th' forest leaves
Bewail your ruined hopes. Alas! poor birds!

II

"Sic vos non vobis fertis avatra boves."

And ye, good oxen, smarting 'neath the stroke
Of ploughman's goad, your ancient stripes
unheal'd;

Not for yourselves ye bear the heavy yoke,
And drag its burden o'er the stony field.
Not for yourselves, but for that lordly clown
Whose vernal toil shall end in harvest feasts:
Who 'neath his vine and figtree shall sit down,
While ye bide comfortless. Alas! poor beasts!

III

"Sic vos non vobis mellificatis apes."

So also ye, O brown and golden bees,
Who sail among the flowers all day long;
Yours is no selfish life of sunny ease,
Culling of sweets with droning, drowsy song;
Ye gather honey for the hive, 'tis true,
But never for yourselves. Marauders seize
Your amber treasures born of light and dew,
And feed upon your fruits. Alas! poor bees!

IV

"Sic ego feci et alter tulit honores."

Ah! even so hath Fate decreed to me!
As birds have built their nests: as goaded beasts
Have borne the yoke for others; and the bee
Hath furnish'd forth for idlers golden feasts —
So have I labored with a fruitless pen;
For, while I wrought, a cruel destiny
Compass'd me round: my toil first mock'd, and
then
Mine honors stole and gave to other men.
Alas! poor bard! Alas! alas! poor me!

THE CHOICE OF RAHBOD

One bold foot in the river,
One on the bank of clay,
Rahbod, chief of the Frisians,
Stood on a long-gone day.

Rahbod, the half-converted
King of a heathen land,
Waiting the saving laver
From Wulfrann's hallow'd hand.

Stoop'd the saint to the current,
Scooping the waters bright:
"Stay!" cried the savage monarch,
Waving his arm of might:

"Stay, and attend, O Wulfrann!
Speak, if thou canst, and tell
Where bide my royal sires —
In heaven or in hell?"

The face of the good saint clouded:
"Pagans were they who bowed
Their knees to the graven idols
Of a worship false and proud.

"Unbaptized sons of Satan,
Where do their spirits dwell?
If not in yon pure heaven,
Alas! O king, — in hell!"

Up from the saving waters
The haughty Rahbod leapt —
Back to his heathen altars,
With scowling brows, he stepp'd.

“The hell of my royal sires,”
Cried he, “shall be *my* heaven!”
And the saint made moan that hour alone
O'er a soul to the demons given.

IN OLD TAGASTE

I

The prudent matron Monica
Dwelt in her husband's house
Like dove within a vulture's nest,
Or tiger's den, a mouse.

Tho' fierce her pagan spouse, she ne'er
Rebell'd in angry strife;
Her mate might rage, revile, assail —
Mute was the little wife.

What time the town viragoes
To learn her secret came:
“Fill up at yonder garden-well,
Your gurglets,” said the dame;

“And, should your husbands' anger
In words or blows **find** vent,
Keep in your mouths **this** water
Till all their wrath be spent.”

II

Henceforth, when at their hearthstones,
The rude Tagasteans brawled,
Their wives with tongues moat-guarded,
No longer blamed or bawled.

But, meek and silent listen'd,
'Neath Monica's sweet spell —
Fast keeping in their close-seal'd lips
The water from her well.

And when their precious gurglets
From constant use ran dry,
They flew to gentle Monica,
And craved a fresh supply.

Then smiled the wise young matron,
And said, "It takes but one
To end a household quarrel!
— And, is the water gone?"

"No matter. You may find the charm
In any well in town:
A silent tongue alone disarms
A furious husband's frown!"

ONLY ONE PARADISE

Out from the desert's burning glare,
Came of old to Damascus fair

The Prophet Mahmoud. Drawing rein
(His barb a-foam from the fiery plain),

He saw the streets of the city lie
Cool and still 'neath the sunset sky;
Saw, 'neath minarets white and slim,
Mosque and villa and garden swim;
Fountains rearing their waters sweet,
Like shadowy sheaves of crystal wheat;
Lanterns, glowing like prison'd stars,
Over the booths and the gay bazaars;
And graceful women veil'd and slight,
Peering down from the casement's height,
Their dark eyes flashing as gems between
The yashmak's folds or lattic'd screen —
All a wonderful, witching dream,
Fit for an Eastern poet's theme.
"These," mused the Prophet, "are far more
kind
Than the bare, wild, burning sands behind!
"Yet, *Allah il Allah!*" he softly said,
Closing his eyes, with averted head:
"This is a Paradise; and for Man
There's but one Paradise. Feast who can;
"The fast of Ramazan bindeth me, —
From the lusts of the flesh I must turn and
flee!"
So he put spurs to his tired steed,
So he gave rein to its wingèd speed;
And straightway (marvel, ye Christian men!)
Plunged back to the dreary desert again.

THE WRESTLERS

In the arena of our age they stand,
Lock'd in fierce combat. One, of princely mold,
Besprent with gems and girt with cloth of gold;
The other, coarsely clad and rough of hand,
His face toil grim'd, his stout arms bare and
tann'd,
And his stern front as his who dares the Fates: . . .
Earth, watching while her wrestlers spurn the sand,
With fear and dread the desp'rate issue waits.

Shall victory attend this glitt'ring Knight?
Or shall the Workman triumph in his brawn?
Praise God! a Mightier comes! The Lord of Light
Leaps to the lists — speaks — and old feuds are
done.
The Christ who toil'd in Naz'reth's sweat and dust
Hath hallowed Labor — Capital made just.

THE FIRST SHIP OF THE AMERICAN NAVY

The Frigate *United States*, launched from the dock
yard of Master Joshua Humphreys, Philadelphia, May
the Tenth, A. D., 1797. Commodore John Barry,
Commander.

A May sun and a noonday tide,
And a warm west wind for the ladies fair!
A hundred craft at anchor ride,
Their bright flags gemming the Delaware.

Ten thousand freemen crowd the quay:
The housetops other thousands hold;
All Philadelphia throngs to see
The launch of Barry's frigate bold.

The gallant ship, *United States*,
First of our valiant navy's fleet:
A nation's fame on her future waits,
A nation's hopes in her present meet!

She is built of the sturdy Georgia oak,
White and solid and season'd long;
Her hull was fashion'd with many a stroke,
Her masts are high and her cables strong.

All copper sheath'd and iron bound,
Assured for peace, alert for war,
The flag she bears shall be world renown'd,
And great the name of her Commodore.

The anchors strain like living things,
And ev'ry rope is taut and tarr'd;
'Tis time the seabird spread her wings
To flee from Master Humphreys's yard!

Behold! the launching-plank is oiled —
Knock back the blocks from keel and side!
Cut loose the ropes round th' capstans coiled,
And let the Frigate waveward slide!

Over the throng a mighty hush
Hath fallen. All the dock grows still;
And white lips question in the crush,
"The ship! How goes she — well or ill?"

Hurrah! hurrah! a thing of pride,
She rushes down her rapturous ways;
The bridegroom water greets his bride,
The sunbeams on their union blaze!

Now, thunder, cannon! left and right,
A shout goes up from myriad throats;
The ladies wave their kerchiefs white,
The men make merry in the boats!

While gaily past the water-gates,
And gaily past each dock and quay,
Our gallant ship, *United States*,
Sails forth to Immortality!

DELICATE DISTINCTIONS

An English bishop of the type terrene,
A social leader keen for great men's crumbs,
Who oft relieved the Purple's dull routine
With glimpses of gay dance and kettledrums:

Meeting upon his visitation's round
A country vicar who was said to be
A famous shot — fonder of horse and hound
Than of the duties of his ministry —

Was minded to rebuke the gray-hair'd sport
Just come from bagging game on mount and
moor:

“’Twere more becoming to his cloth to court
His desk and books, his pulpit and his poor.”

“Ah! well, my lord,” the parson made reply,

“These are the sole diversions of my life.
I’m never seen at teas or dinners — I
Don’t even go to dances with my wife!”

The bishop's ears grew red. "If you allude,"
He stiffly said, "to Lady Tynsell's ball,
The gossips were at fault. I only viewed
The dance from th' adjoining supper-hall."

"Just so, your lordship!" laughed the vicar bold:
"With growing years some joys we all must yield;
Since I and my good horse are waxing old,
I merely watch 'the death' from the next field!"

THE KING'S SKULL

One day, within the grim vaults of the dead,
Diogenes went searching 'mid the bones
And grinning skulls of long-departed ones,
Strewing their worms and ashes o'er the stones.
—"What seekest thou?" great Alexander said.

"I seek, O king!" was answered sneeringly,
"Thy father's skull. Tho' once it wore a crown,
'Tis here, at last, both crownless and unknown.
Bones, there are plenty — skulls of knave and
clown —
If thou canst find King Philip's, show it me!"

DEEDS, NOT WORDS

Bold was the Roman captain whom Titus Livius
cites,
Who, after many a weary march and myriad valiant
fights,
Was summon'd in his reverend age with grief and
shame intense
To stand before the Senate for a capital offence.

There, the old hero gath'ring up his proofs of loyalty,
Rich trophies of his gallant deeds upon the land
and sea:

The naval and the mural wreath, the camp and
civic crown,
Before th' assembled Senators, indignant, cast
them down.

And throwing back his robe, and laying bare his
stalwart breast,
Where many a livid scar and seam were legibly
impressed,
With silent gesture: "Shame!" he cried. "Behold
these gashes! Look,
And read my treason in these wounds as in an open
book!"

O honorable scars! O wounds more eloquent
than words,
Which, at the best, but cleave the air, and take
their flight, like birds!
How feelingly ye pled his cause who scorned to
plead his own,
And melted into tenderness those hearts of steel
and stone.

Their deepest veneration earn'd, their highest
homage won,
The noble Judges rose *en masse* to hail Rome's
valiant son;
And, freed from ev'ry shadow of dishonor or of
blame,
They wrote his name immortal on the glorious
lists of Fame!

Lo! in this Roman legend a priceless lesson lies
For all who really love their land to read and
recognize;
The vet'ran's story ringing down Time's dusty
corridor
Re-echoes like a silver chime thro' days of peace or
war.

Upon the soldier's ear it sounds its grateful guar-
antee
That, in his wounds, the Nation reads his tried
fidelity;
That empty sleeve and clanking crutch arouse
within her heart
A love, a trust, a sympathy that never can depart.

INDISSOLUBLE

True love a twin hath, yclept Perfect Trust;
Who trusts not, loves not: all his vows are hollow;
When Confidence hath crumbled into dust,
Love, to despairing ruin, soon must follow.

CONTENT

"Never but once," the Persian poet said
(Sadi the poet, strong of heart and head),
"Never but once did I lament forlorn
My cruel lot; and then 'twas on a morn
When, bare of foot, I wander'd with my muse,
And sighed, 'Alas! how shall I buy me shoes?'"

“Lo! ere the murmur died upon my tongue,
I saw a shadow in my path — a young
And meagre man who, in the open street,
Lay crippled sorely, lacking both his feet:
Yet only crooned a little cheerful song,
And begged a trifle from the hurrying throng.

“‘Kind heaven!’ I cried (whilst on my naked toes
I leapt about till blood and spirits rose):
“ ‘Forgive the selfish heart which only sees
And, purblind, pities its own miseries;
Want may be bitter, but content is sweet:
For what are shoes to him who hath no feet?’ ”

THE ECHO OF LIFE

I passed thro’ a forest of trees,
And lo! the woodman was there,
Swinging his axe in the morning breeze,
And felling an oak-tree fair.
And ever he sang as he wrought,
And his words rang clear and high:
“As the tree falls — as the tree falls,
So shall it lie — lie — lie!”

I passed thro’ a forest of men,
And lo! the Woodman was there,
The Woodman Death with his weapon keen
Felling a life most fair.
And ever he sang as he wrought,
And his chant soared to the sky:
“As a man lives — as a man lives,
So shall he die — die — die!”

O fate of the falling tree!
O doom of the dying life!
This was the moral ye brought to me
With bliss or bitterness rife.
As the trees of the forest incline,
So shall they fall and lie;
And the evil or good of this life of mine
Must seal my fate when I die.

THE BELL

Long since, in Gascony, a robber stole
From a poor Curé his one precious cow.
Tho' safe he hid and hooded it — somehow,
Its muffled bell rang loud to every soul,
Blabbing the secret of its hiding-hole!
The thief from off its neck the telltale tore,
And thrust it deep in earth. Vain task! its toll
Still chimed and chimed till, straightway, frightened
sore,
The rogue made urgency to regain the goal,
And to its owner's byre the beast restore.

All miscreants know that Bell. When evil things
Knives vainly strive to hood and hide away,
They cannot still its tongue — it rings and rings,
And he who calls it *Conscience* owns its sway.

THE ELIXIR OF YOUTH

Distill'd in a beautiful magical clime,
From the amaranth-bloom and the honey-dew,
'Tis quaff'd but once — in that radiant time
When earth and heaven are new.

Bubbles of bliss on its cup brim dance;
Who drinks of it strays, like Adam's peer,
Thro' an Eden flush'd with love's romance,
Hope's rosiest atmosphere.

Its occult spell to ruin and sin
Hath sages lured, and alchemists;
Full many a Faust risks all to win
Its pulse in his palsied wrists.

For it mounts to the brain in a dazzling flood,
Invests dull clay with its glamour bright;
It glows in the eye, inflames the blood,
And thrills the heart with delight.

In the might of its mail no task seems hard —
Immortal power and will are there;
To th' vision of Youth (as the eyes of the bard)
Life's ills show good and fair.

Alas! in the hour the draught is drain'd,
All things appear in their sober truth;
We may husband the dregs the cup contain'd —
The elixir is gone with youth!

Gone — till we drink it new once more
In our Father's house, by the shining River;
When age and decay and death are o'er,
God's saints shall be young forever!

A PERSIAN PHARISEE

When I was young, and pompously austere,
(Full of a zeal unripe and indiscreet),
It was my wont to rise at midnight drear,
And read and pray in flagrant self-conceit.

One night, my father, turning in his bed,
Saw me upon my knees, but spake no word.
"Behold! thy other children sleep," I said:
"And I alone arise to praise the Lord!"

"Son of my soul!" the holy man replied,
"Thou art no better than thy sleeping brothers;
'Twere safer far in harmless rest to bide,
Than wake to judge with scorn the ways of
others!"

THE GREATER HERO

The soldier who, with fearless front
Faces the foeman's guns,
Bearing the battle's fiercest brunt
Where blood, like water, runs,
Men call a hero: on his head
A crown of laurel place,
And hail him as a victor dread,
A saviour of his race.

Far more a hero he who stands
A sentry thro' the night,
Guarding with bold yet bloodless hands
Some mute, unblazon'd Right.
The mob with all its mighty lungs
Howls past him. Lone, forsaken,
'Mid hatred, scorn, and strife of tongues,
He holds his trust unshaken.

SINCE MOTHER DIED

The fire sends forth its ruddy glow,
The brazen lamp is brightly lit
Within the room where, long ago,
Dear mother always loved to sit.
This was her chair, . . . Ah! fire and lamp
Are cheerless things where wraiths abide:
The spot seems ever dark and damp
Since mother died.

Here is her workbox on the shelf,
Her little bird sits there, poor thing!
In those old times, the merry elf
Did nothing all day long but sing.
'Tis silent now. It sadly broods;
Beneath its wing its head doth hide;
We cannot understand its moods
Since mother died.

The clock, too, on the western wall,
The clock her hand so often wound,
Like some dead friend is mute to all,
Its silvern tongue gives forth no sound.
Before its corpselike face I cower,
And note its listless hands stretch'd wide
It never once hath told the hour
Since mother died.

Days come and go, — now fast, now slow:
And is the weather foul or fair?
Is that the sunshine or the snow?
I know not. Here's her vacant chair;
And naught is as it used to be
When we were happy at her side;
Life — love — all things seem changed to me
Since mother died.

ALAS! POOR POET!

A friend once ask'd our poet:
"Tho' wooed for ages past,
Why do those maids, the Muses,
Old maids remain at last?"

His empty purse displaying,
The man of sonnets said:
"Because the wight who woos them
Hath seldom means to wed! "

THE REFINER'S TEST

I

My friend, the goldsmith, in his laboratory,
What time his smelters prove the precious ore,
As virgin metal in its molten glory,
Fit for the ransom of an emperor;
Above the crucible, attentive bending,
Beholds the golden bubbles rise and break:
Yet ceases not his watching or his tending,
Till on the surface of that mimic lake,
That smooth, still surface, he hath, clear, detected
(What ev'ry alchemist would fain behold),
His own resemblance faithfully reflected
As in a mirror of the purest gold.

II

A symbol, this, of that grand Laboratory,
Wherein God tries His chosen ones with fire:
In the red furnace of Love's purgatory,
His saints refining by afflictions dire.

The human dross may in them boil and bubble,
Rebellious 'neath misfortunes manifold:
The flesh revolt against the toil and trouble
That, cleansing, prove the Master's purest gold;

Still doth He test them with divine affection,
Nor stays His hand, nor cools one fiery coal,
Until He sees His own sublime reflection
Distinctly mirrored in each chasten'd soul.

LEGEND OF SAINT JOSEPH'S STAFF

I

It grows in a village garden,
A village by the sea;
Its graceful bell-shaped lilies
Of snow-white purity.

Crowning with clinging clusters
The long green leafless stem —
My heart goes back thro' the ages
As I, dreaming, gaze on them.

Goes back to the golden porches
Of Judah's Temple gray,
Where our Lady's suitors gather'd
On her blest Espousal-day.

II

I see the young men thronging
The courts, as for a feast;
A wand to each is given
By the silver-hair'd high priest,

Who silent prays Jehovah:
"Make clear this mystery!
O flower of God, bud from *his* rod
Who Mary's spouse shall be!"

And lo! in the hands of Joseph
(The eldest suitor there),
The staff begins to burgeon,
To blossom at the prayer;

Till graceful, bell-shap'd lilies
(Strange to Jerusalem!)
Crown with their clinging clusters
The long green leafless stem!

III

Kneeling, the youths salute it —
The token sent of God
As Israel's princes yielded
Homage to Aaron's rod.

And Mary, veiled and trembling,
Hears thro' the silent house:
"Hail, flow'ring staff of Joseph!
All hail, the Virgin's spouse!"

RESPONSIBILITY

It dogs our footsteps (oft Nemesis led),
It tracks our lightest words, our idlest deeds;
It follows whether vice or virtue leads;
Shadows the living and survives the dead.
We shudder when we hear its phantom tread,

Remorseless in our wake; we wring our hands:
"Could we but once escape this thing of dread!"
We vainly moan. There, at our back, it stands,
And will not down. Pale Banquo at the feast
Less fearsome were to murderous Macbeth,
Than this grim ghost that follows on the least
Of our misdeeds; from reason's dawn till death,
Leaving man's life not one brief instant free
From its stern, strict accountability.

A TRUE FRIEND

In the warm delicious heyday
Of a summer-tide success,
When the world is full of music,
Full of light and loveliness;
When the host of hearts around thee
Gaily share thy pomp and pride —
Ah! it is not then, my dear one,
I rejoice to seek thy side:
Not then, not then, my fair one,
I would fain with thee abide.

But, when clouds obscure the azure
(In the autumn of the heart),
When the fickle friends of Pleasure
With the birds and flowers depart;
When alone, perchance dishonor'd,
Thou art left to misery —
Ah! 'tis then, 'tis then, belovèd,
I would fly to comfort thee:
'Mid the false, thy friend devoted,
Unto death, I'd cleave to thee!

DAWN-VOICES

Hast ever listen'd in the earliest dawn,
When all mankind are wrapt in deep repose,
While shadowy mists o'er sky and stars are drawn,
Until the orient flaunts its flame of rose, —
Hast, ling'ring, listen'd to the strange, weird cries
That from the heart of Nature plaintive rise ?

'Twould seem as if this world of care and sin,
This sad old world, thus mourn'd its misery:
"Oh! must I now another day begin, —
A day of sorrow, shame, iniquity ?
Resume again my weary weight of woe,
And stagger on, disconsolate, below ?"

Re-echoes far and near that doleful call,
Till lonely birds a-wing or in their nests,
Join with the beasts awaking in their stalls
In one wild wail from furr'd or feather'd breasts:
"Alas, old world of sorrow and of sin!
Must thou, in dread, another day begin ?"

Then, glad and high, rings Chanticleer's bold cry:
"The sun is up!" he shrills, "the stars grow pale.
Rejoice, sad world! Let cares and fears go by;
Reform the wrong, and let the right prevail!
Tho' here below, full many a tear must fall,
The saints still live, and God is over all!"

A STRANGE TRIBUNAL

In poring over some antique transcriptions
Of ancient men and manners, once we read
That, in the last rites which the old Egyptians
Perform'd above their dead, —

Judging, they question'd of the soul departed,
How had it erst with little children dealt?
Had it their wrongs redress'd,—had, tender hearted,
For all their sorrows felt?

Or, had it in its selfish strength neglected
The helpless waifs that round its porches clung?
Had trampled on the weak or unprotected,
Or scandalized the young?

Pending the question of all other merits,
Accurs'd the bier unblest by children's prayers;
Anathema on cold and selfish spirits!
No Paradise was theirs.

For only those great, generous hearts, and gentle,
Were reckon'd by the Judge as undefiled,
Who ne'er had slighted in their love parental,
The suff'rings of a child.

Know ye the moral of this ancient practice,
This relic of a heathen race unblest —
Which blooms from out the past, as blooms a cactus
From out a mummy's breast?

'Tis a wing'd seedlet from the Tree of Wisdom,
Sown in the shadows, blown in sunlight free,
'Tis: "Whatsoe'er ye did to these my children,
Ye did it unto me!"

MOORE OF THE MELODIES

Here's a health to thee, Tom Moore.—*Byron*

'Twixt the waning of spring and the summer's
sweet dawning,
Ere the May blossoms droop'd on the bosom of
June,
Thy coming, great bard, was in nature's fair morn-
ing,
When the sun of her seasons was rounding to
noon.

No breath of the winter thy natal day chilling,
The Muses beheld thee that morning, 'tis said,*
With a rose in thy mouth and a nightingale trilling
Its exquisite song at the side of thy bed.

Oh, surely no lips to the flowers were dearer
Than thine, where the rose-leaves of fancy lay
furl'd;
No nightingale's lay could be sweeter or clearer
Than the song thou wert destined to sing to the
world.

The glories of Erin, her lights and her shadows,
The limpid delights of her loughs and her streams,
The blue of her heavens, the green of her meadows
Were imaged, dear bard, in thy beautiful dreams.

Her joy was thy joy, and her sorrow thy sorrow,
Beside the blest graves of her heroes and kings,
Thou hast caught the old harp from the lone walls
of Tara,
And struck a new strain from its mouldering
strings.

* By the poet Rogers.

Oh! well was it said, tho' the king rule the nation,
Tho' the making of laws to the statesman belongs,
Who reigns first, who reigns last in the hearts of
creation
Is the God-given poet who maketh our songs!

A RUINED VILLAGE

The corn is springing close to the sea,
A balmy breeze blows out of the west,
Over the top of the cedar tree,
The fishhawk darts to its lofty nest.

Past glittering lake and grassy lawn,
The road a-glimmer with golden light,
We ride by the banks of the Manasquan,
A surfeit of beauty left and right.

Beauty of water, where trees above
Brood o'er a mirror of trees below;
Beauty of bridge, where the sweet, wild dove
Coos from the arches, soft and low.

Beauty of verdure, whose flora fills
The air with its spicy, exquisite scent;
Beauty of valleys and rolling hills
Domed by the broad, blue firmament.

The pine tree raises its hairy arms,
The cedar quivers its ragged beard:
We quit the pike with its roadside farms,
And ride thro' the woodlands dim and weird

O ruined village! O ghostly town!
O wood-encircled, wild Allaire!
Your crumbling walls are dank and brown,
The weeds grow thick round the mould'ring stair.

Sashless windows and roofless rooms,
The loft laid bare to the open sky;
The broken doors, where the wildflower blooms,
And the great trees thrust their plumes on high,

Are sadder far than the ruined mill
Whose depths in empty darkness yawn,
Whose wheels are rusted, whose works are still,
Whose busy toilers are dead or gone;

For one was the haunt of soulless trade,
Hard and stern in its sordid strife;
The other the nest where Love once made
A home for the hopes of a human life.

THE BABY'S PRAYER

A little white-rob'd maid at mother's knee
Kneels night and morn within the nurs'ry warm,
And, lifting folded hands, prays tenderly:
"God bless Papa and keep him from all harm!"

"*God bless Papa!*" The whisper floating up,
Like gentle mists at golden sunset hours,
Drops down, each morn from heaven's inverted cup,
Its dewlike blessing on life's thirsting flowers.

"And keep him from all harm!" The strong man
goes

His thorny way; the road is rough and bare;
From dawn of busy day until its close,
His life is full of toil and anxious care.

And thro' the night the siren Pleasure sings
To lure him from his dear ones and his home;
(A thousand evil, bright, seductive things
Beset the feet that thro' the darkness roam!)

But foul temptation may not him ensnare
Whose cuirass is a baby's clinging arm:
'Twixt him and vice mounts up that potent prayer:
"God bless Papa and keep him from all harm!"

MARDI GRAS

The torches dance along the dusky street,
And in their glow, the wide piazza swarms
With brilliant shapes, grotesque and motley forms,
Mummers and masques, who chant a chorus sweet.
From marble balconies fair ladies lean,
And jewel'd fingers rain upon the scene
Gilded confections, fresh and fragrant flowers,
And perfum'd waters in rare, radiant showers.

But lo! above the laughter and the song,
Tolleth the midnight bell! Lights disappear;
In sudden darkness melts the silent throng —
The ashes and the gloom of Lent are here.
Ah! even so, my soul, Life's Carnival, one day,
Shall fade into the gloom and ashes of decay!

THE LOUP-GAROU OF THE WINE-CUP

I drink by day or I drink by night
The draught that worketh this loathsome change;
I burn with fever, I freeze with fright,
Yet I yield to the passion strange;
And forth I go from the sunny rooms,
From hearts so tender, from friends so true,
The mountain glens and the forest glooms
To wander — a Loup-garou!

Over the river and past the moor,
Thro' the city's streets I roam and rage;
With all that is gentle, good, and pure,
A ceaseless war to wage. . . .
Once I sat at the blessed feast,
By a fair-hair'd maid with eyes of blue;
But now — make way for the howling beast!
Make way for the Loup-garou!

O white-robed girl, in your garden alone,
With your rose-wreath'd hair and your eyes of
light,
Kneel in the dusk by the wall of stone,
And pray for your lover to-night!
O God in heaven! receive her prayer,
And break these burning fetters in two;
From this foul Gehenna of black despair,
Deliver the Loup-garou!

THE MADONNA OF THE ROSE

The Babe is in His Mother's arms
Beside the open door,
('Tis in the city of the Sun,*
In Egypt's land of yore).

A rose-tree in its perfect bloom
Before the threshold grows:
The Babe puts forth His dimpled hand,
And reaches for a rose.

So fair this fragrant thing and soft,
Like snowflake in the sun,
The little fingers stretch aloft;
Sweet coos the Holy One.

A shadow steals across the face
Of Mary, Mother mild,
She sees the white rose in the grasp
Of her belovèd Child —

No longer white! Alas! a thorn
Thro' tender hand hath sped:
The scarlet of His wounded palm
Hath dyed the white rose red!

And, looking up, the Mother sees
Thro' tears that dim her eyes,
The rose boughs form an em'rald cross
Against the quiet skies.

She droops her face against His hair —
(O dream of death and loss!)
She sees the blood-stain'd thorns and
nails,
She looks on Calvary's Cross!

* Heliopolis.

LOVE, THE DIVINE

Now there remain these three, faith, hope, and charity,
but the greatest of these is charity.—Cor. xiii. 13.

Beyond the skies, Faith joyous dies:
It turns to sight at heaven's door;
Hope there doth meet fruition sweet,
And in it rests. But, evermore,
Love, born of God, unchanging, pure,
Thro' endless ages shall endure.

THE TOUCHSTONE

I told mine enemy the truth. His brow
At first grew stern: and, from his angry eye,
The lightnings flash'd. But soon he spake: "'Tis
now,
I see I judged you falsely. Wrong was I.
Forgive me for the past; and let us forth
To roam thro' peaceful meads, all strife at end!"
So, arm in arm, we went, no longer wroth —
The truth had made mine enemy a friend.

I told my friend the truth. He bravely smiled,
And with a gracious courtesy averr'd:
"Your candor pleases me,"— yet, 'neath his mild
And suave exterior a something stirred
Which plainer said than words: "We are estranged
Forevermore. Your lance hath wounded me
Past all redress!"— Love had to hatred changed:
The truth had made my friend an enemy.

BABOUSHEKA

This Christmas eve, look with me thro' the
window,
And see that restless shadow on the snow!
A small old woman, dusky as a Hindoo,
With broom in hand, is pacing to and fro.

Sweeping the crossing,—sweeping, sweeping ever!
For more than nineteen centuries of gloom,
Her phantom comes at Yuletide. Heard ye never
Of wicked Babousheka and her broom?

Tradition tells that, when the Wise Men wandered
From out the East (the good Three Kings of old!)
Seeking the Christ, they often paused and pondered,
And gazed bewilder'd at the Star of gold.

And once, when dim it shone upon the seekers,
They met a woman sweeping at her door;
They stopp'd and asked (her name was Babou-
sheka),
Would she direct them, which road, out of four,

Led to Judea and its new-born Saviour?
She toss'd her head, and stamped upon the snow;
Made mouths at them, with other rude behaviour,
And (knowing all the while) cried, "*I don't
know!*"

But when the gentle Kings rode onward, weeping,
And meekly took the right road out of four,
She found they left her sweeping, sweeping, sweep-
ing,
Without the power to enter at her door!

And so, for all these long-drawn years of sorrow,
Her ghost, they say, is seen on Christmas Eve,
Sweeping and weeping, hoping that the morrow
Will bring the Kings her spirit to relieve.

But, all in vain; for, nevermore returning,
The Wise Men journeyed home another road:
And Babousheka, spite her bitter yearning,
Can never reach their Infant King and God.

A SEASHELL FROM THE IRISH COAST

They place it in my tender hands,
This pink-lipp'd vagrant of the sea:
This pearly waif from Erin's sands,
I clasp it reverently.

For, as I lift it to mine ear,
From out its rosy, spiral throat,
A plaintive monotone I hear,
Like sound of ships afloat.

"Across the ocean, wide and blue"
(The fairy mourner softly wails):
"My native waters roll. I view
The sands, the passing sails.

"Have pity on a poor exile!"
The bright lips plead, once wreath'd
with foam;
"Oh! take me back to Erin's isle,
Back to my dear old home!"

No briny mists enfold the shell,
Yet briny mists mine eyes obscure,
And in my bosom seems to swell
A memory sad and pure.

A face arises white as pearl,
The fever stain is on its lips;
And locks, like seaweeds out of curl,
The glazing eyes eclipse.

O surge of Life, fast ebbing low,
Leaving astrand one shatter'd bark,
I hear a dirge impassion'd, slow,
Drifting along the dark;

“Across the ocean blue and wide”
(The shell-like murmur moans to me):
“I view once more Bundoran's tide,
The passing sails I see!

“Have pity on a poor exile!”
(The dying lips are fleck'd with foam):
“Oh! take me back to Erin's isle,
Back to my dear old home!”

AFTER THE GARDEN PARTY

Her heart is sore and heavy with a bitter disappointment,
Her aching head is fetter'd as with fiery bands of steel:
E'en Gilead's balm seems missing — the sweet old
fragrant ointment
Is not at hand her spirit-wounds to heal.

She pushes back her clust'ring curls, throws down
her *Enoch Arden*,
As the twilight deepens round her, and she lingers
quite alone,
Where the dancers long since left her, at the window
o'er the garden,
Leaning out upon the dusky sill of stone.

Oh, the stillness, oh, the sweetness of the flow'ry
dim enclosure!
The woodbine on the trellis, and the roses in
their bed:
The early stars outshining in their silv'ry calm
composure;
And a night bird making music overhead!

Her wide blue eyes are lifted, wet with strange and
wistful sorrow,
A tear is on her velvet cheek (a raindrop in the
drowth!)
Ah! do not grieve, heart's darling, dreaming sadly
of the morrow,
Nor wear that plaintive tremor on your mouth!

If Nature, like a priestess, with her holy oils anoint
you,
Beneath her healing unction ev'ry pain and doubt
must flee;
The woodbines whisper: "Courage! *we* will never
disappoint you!"
Each rose-heart murmurs: "Put your trust in
me!"

And the blessed stars are singing in the blue ethereal spaces:

“Cares vanish like the vapors, and disappointments pass.

From th’ immortal spirit made for everlasting places,

The mist of tears mounts upward, like dew from off the grass!”

So it chances as she lingers, as she leaning looks and listens,

Her heavy heart is lightened, and her aching head is eased.

She hath dropp’d her disappointment where the woodbine’s chalice glistens,

Her care into the rose’s heart, well pleased.

And all the garner’d glory of the starshine seems to scatter

The shadows that beset her since the closing of the day.

Chant the voices of the garden: “What do cares or crosses matter?

God loves you, and His mercies last for aye!”

THE DOOM-CUP

The furious winds and waters plough’d

The weird old coast of Brittany,

Where on the cliffs a Princess stood,

And dared her knights to face the flood,

And breast the rising sea.

Her dazzling length of red-gold hair
Swept, wind blown, down her rich cymar;
Her port was proud: her face was fair,
And in her hand a goblet rare
Was shining like a star.

She hurl'd the grail far out to sea,
She cried with mirthful, mocking glance:
"Whoe'er that Cup shall bring to me,
To-night shall at the revels be
My partner in the dance!"

Forth leap'd a page of noble rank
To seek and find the golden Cup;
The tide was high; he rose, he sank;
Rose once again; sank, — rose and sank,
And nevermore came up.

Loud laughed the Princess to the sea;
Her deep eyes blazed with hellish fire:
"Whoso shall fetch that Cup," cried she,
"Shall at the banquet sing to me,
And soothe me with his lyre!"

Another plunge where sharp reefs rise
By deep and treach'rous waters cross'd,—
Lo! glaring in its dread surprise,
A mangled face with ghastly eyes,
Swept up, and then was lost.

Loud laugh'd once more that child of sin;
And, laughing still, she, shameless, cried:
"These noble youths have luckless been;
But who shall yet the Doom-Cup win,
Shall wear me for his bride!"

Up rose, up floated then and there,
A Merman towards the cruel dame;
A sea king fair and debonair,
With snake-like coils of em'rald hair,
And lips and eyes of flame!

Against his mail of silvery scale,
The troubled waters moaning beat;
He waved aloft the fateful Cup,
As, with the surges drifting up,
He cast it at her feet.

"O Ladye! Flower of the sands!
I come for thee, dear love!" he cried:
"My lyre shall sound thee sea-romaunts,
My hand shall lead thee thro' the dance,
And thou shalt be my bride!"

He clasp'd her waist, he clasp'd her wrist,
Her piercing shrieks the heavens rent;
He clasp'd her waist, he clasp'd her wrist,
And lo! in thunderous waves abyss'd,
To doom and death she went!

.

The fierce waves dash on shuddering reefs,
The red dulse stains the lonely shore;
And coasting-ships and fisher-skiffs
Sail swiftly past the fatal cliffs,
Where blood was spill'd of yore.

What time at midnight o'er the waves,
The eerie lights and shadows flee:
When tempests roar thro' ocean's caves,
A ghostly Ladye rends its graves,
And rises from the sea.

But ere she scales the cliffs, a band
Of angry wraiths the storm winds ride.
Her victims of the sea and land,
Cursing the Doom-Cup in her hand,
Pursue her shrieking down the strand,
And thrust her 'neath the tide.

A MOSAIC OF ANACHREON

A merry, leering face with arching brows
Crown'd by the blood-red jewels of the vine;
Eyes where the light of laughter holds carouse,
And lips o'erdropping with Hellenian wine —

Behold! it breathes of Teos and the isles;
Of sunshine, melody, and silver streams,
Where graceful Bathyllus, basking in thy smiles,
Echoes, old bard! the rapture of thy dreams.

Scion of Codrus, last of Athen's kings,
Thy song the wrath of tyrants oft disarm'd;
The music of thy lyre's magic strings
Throughout all time hath sage and scholar
charm'd,

But, what avail thee now, Anachreon, tell,
Thy banquet revelries o'er cups of gold?
The statue in th' Athenian citadel?
The base delights, the carnal lusts of old?

What profit now the pride and pomps of earth ?
The favor of the fam'd Polycrates ?
The homage of Hipparchus, or the mirth
And gay excesses of thy life of ease ?

The old Judean seer once sang of those
Who spend their substance weaving webs for flies:
While others hatch from eggs of asps such woes,
That he who feeds on them tormented dies.

So, with thy fame, thy polish'd pagan verse —
Spinning of webs, poor wight! thy task forlorn;
From serpents' eggs, thy vices hatch'd a curse,
And earth were better hadst thou ne'er been born.

OUT OF THE GAME

Sitting here where the ferns and grasses
Rustle around my rustic seat;
Over my head the maple masses
Its flick'ring shadows cool and sweet.

I hear the click of the balls and mallets
Yonder, a garden party gay,
Claude and Margery, Paul and Alice
Are playing an old-time game of croquet.

Why does a vision bright and beaming
Rise 'twixt me and the blithesome group ?
A girlish form of slenderest seeming,
A graceful head whence the bright braids droop:

A rippling laugh, like a child's, light hearted,
A small foot pressing the fated ball,
Her mallet raised and her red lips parted,
My grieving heart recalls it all!

Eyes, gold fring'd, as blue as pansies,
Wild-rose cheeks by the sunshine kiss'd,
Fairest dreams of a poet's fancies,
Must ye melt in a graveyard mist ?

O Claude, O Margery, not in malice
Falls my frown on your sport to-day!
Not in scorn, dear Paul and Alice,
Turn mine eyes from your pastime gay.

Memories strangely fond and tender,
The spot, the hour embalm in tears;
My soul must needs its reverence render
The maid who died in the buried years.

Over my darling's cheeks, long hidden,
The wild-rose scatters its rich perfume;
Up from her slumb'ring eyes, unbidden,
The velvet pansies bud and bloom.

And hush'd for aye is the rippling laughter
On lips once glowing and sensitive, —
O love! if there were no blest Hereafter —
How could we bear thy loss and live!

THE FATAL YULE

A thousand years ago, and more, as ancient
sagas sing,
When bold Thoragesius of the Norse ruled Erin as
its king;

One day, slow straying past the ridge, beyond old
Dublin's dun,*
Where all the Liffey's hurdle-bridge glowed blood
red in the sun,

In softest robe of sea-green silk, her fair hair's
em'rald wreath,
He saw a maiden white as milk, — daughter of
royal Meath.

He looked upon her winsome face, her presence
angel fair,
He loved her for her virgin grace, her wealth of
sunny hair.

Then sent he to her sire, the king, a message rank
with pride:
“At Yule to me thy daughter bring, that she may be
my bride!”

The Irish monarch feigned his wrath, and answered, “She is thine;
And with her fifteen of her maids, all of the royal
line;

“Make ready for their coming!” Thor grew ruddy
with delight,
And summon'd fifteen of his lords to greet the
maidens bright.

They came, the Princess and her suite, upon the
blessed Yule,
Where brilliant shone the splendid court that own'd
the Norse king's rule;

* A fort.

But, when his chieftains fain had wooed the royal
 maids of Meath,
They met with fierce rebuff and rude, as swords
 flash'd from their sheath;

For fifteen valiant beardless knights in maiden
 robes disguised
Did battle for their Princess white, and pagan lust
 chastised!

They fought till all the palace flowed with Scandi-
 navian blood;
Thorgesius and his courtiers lay slain in that
 crimson flood.

And, rising in their vengeance grand, the sons of
 Erin old
Drove out the Norsemen from the land, or slew
 their minions bold.

Ere waned that fatal Yule of death, full many a
 gallant squire
Bore back the royal maid of Meath unharm'd to
 her brave sire.

LEGEND OF ALESSANDRA

I

Alessandra, star of Aragona,
 Brighter than its brightest orb of night,
Sweeter was than fruits of Barcelona
 Mellow'd by the day's resplendent light.

In her black-fringed skirt of satin yellow,
Snowy blouse enlaced with ribbons fair,
Gem-besprent her velvet black bolero,
And a red rose in her glossy hair;

At the feast, with ankles richly bangled,
Danced she to her tinkling tamborine;
Waved her castanets or scarf bespangled,
Merriest Spanish damsel ever seen!

II

Lovers twain contended for her favor.
Lovers twain? She knew not which to choose.
Fought they with their rapiers the braver,
Knowing not which swain she might refuse.

Fought and slew each other, mad with passion,
Jealous of some petty girlish gage;
Then their kinsmen came in vengeful fashion,
And the poor maid slaughtered in their rage.

From her neck the lovely head they sever'd,
Cast her bleeding corse in some old well,
Where she lay — alas! sweet soul, yet wayward! —
Till there came a saint (as legends tell).

III

A Thaumaturgus, sent to Aragona
As white rob'd missionary, man of God;
He heard the grewsome tale of Alessandra,
And saw her blood still red upon the sod.

At the well he halted with his brothers,
Lifted up his heart in silent prayer;
Then aloud (while wept the Spanish mothers),
"Arise, come forth, my daughter!" cried he there.

Lo! from the gloomy depths the murdered maiden
Rose in her pallid loveliness to view!
Like a stray visitant from some lost Aiden,
Floated above the waters cold and blue.

IV

The while the agèd saint his ear inclining
Hearken'd unto her whisper'd tale of woe,
The lookers-on beheld the teardrops shining
Like jewels on the maiden's cheeks of snow.

And when the priest, his holy hand upraising,
Signed the absolving cross above her head,
She sank from sight, in joyous accents praising
The One whose mercy called her from the dead.

For she had been a child of impulse, feeling,
A little feeble, tempted damosel,
And heaven in pity nature's laws repealing,
Had wrought for her a marv'lous miracle.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

When Cappadocia sent its virgin knight
To join his legion in Berytus old,
With wide-eyed horror to the hero told
The populace, their tale of wild affright:
A monstrous dragon of exceeding might
Ravaged the spot, and for his victim claimed
The king's sole daughter and the land's delight,
A beauteous maid — Cleodolina named.

Like an archangel clad in armor white,
Saint George the dragon fought, and him subdued:
Fast bound him with the maiden's cincture bright,
And bade her lead him wheresoe'er she would.
So did *our* George set fair Columbia free,
So smote and bound the dragon — Tyranny!

AT THE BAR

A monarch old, a warrior bold,
And a grave philosopher, all three
Met at the judgment seat of God,
To claim the prize of eternity.

"Long have I ruled a wide domain,"
Said the king, "there plenty reigned and peace."
"Brave was my fight for th' cause of Right,"
Cried the soldier, "wrongs thro' me shall cease!"

"Mine was the lore of earth and air,
Of fire and water," the sage averr'd;
"The world shall bless my name for aye,
For Wisdom dwelt in my lightest word."

The while they spake, a spirit shy
And closely veiled drew near the bar;
Within his arms a something shone
More radiant than the morning star.
“Who art thou?” “Lord!” the spirit sighed,
“I (lowly Brother of Charity),
Have brought Thee naught save this orphan child,
Whose soul I rescued for love of Thee!”
“Approach!” the Judge exclaimed, “thy crown
Is won! The joys of heaven are thine.
King, victor, sage is he who saves
From ruin one lost lamb of Mine!”

THE LIGHTS OF HOME

From stranger scenes at eve returning,
I trod the paths belov'd of yore;
And in the cottage windows burning
The welcome candles hail'd once more.
With fiery tongues they seem'd to say:
“Dear wanderer, from far away!
Tho' long and late thy feet may roam,
We bid thee cheer!
Joy, peace are here,
Where shine the friendly lights of home!”

Ah! then, I rais'd mine eyes (o'erflowing
With happy tears) to heaven's blue,
Where in God's palace windows glowing,
I saw His tapers shining, too:
His stars that sang with rapture strong:
“Dear exile, thou hast wander'd long,
We greet thee from this glittering dome!
Joy, peace divine
Are here, where shine
The lights of Love's eternal Home!”

A WISE SUGGESTION

"Sweet, I would die for you!" sighed Lance,
yest're'en,

When he and Clare paused in their garden walk:
She, showing by his side in lustrous green,
Fair as a lily on a moonlit stalk.

"Sweet, I would die!" her hand, a flutt'ring bird,
Flew to his lips with silence on its wings;
Her gentle face with smile demure was stirr'd,
Her eyes grew large with bright, unutter'd things.

Withdrawing from his mouth her guardian hand:
"Lance, do you truly love me?" (soft she spake);
"Love you?" he wailed, indignant, half unmann'd,
"Full well you know I'd perish for your sake!"

Again, that merry, mocking smile peep'd forth:
"Off, gay coquette!" he cried; "scorning my pain
I'll none of you!" And so turn'd from her, wroth;
But Clare pursued, and laughed and laughed
again.

"Listen, dear heart!" she gasp'd. "Dying at best
Is but a dismal thing. A better do:
In golden union, by kind heaven bless'd,
Live for me, Lance, and I will live for you!"

AT LAST

He fought for justice, strove for right,
Waged ceaseless war at fearful odds:
His only sword the word of might,
His only armor — God's.

For principle he spent himself,
And scorn'd the lust of pride and place;
Chose poverty in lieu of pelf,
In honor's stead, disgrace.

Nor sighed he for reward or thanks:
And while he lived and when he died,
They dubb'd him "madman," "crank of cranks,"
But, on the Other Side,

"Give place!" the Master said; and lo!
Breathing celestial bliss and calm,
Earth's madman wore in heaven's glow
The Martyr's crown and palm!

THE SPHINX OF THE SEA

Not to Egyptian sands alone belongs
The storied Sphinx. Upon this mighty sea
Her other self abides eternally,
Brooding, inscrutable, o'er ancient wrongs.
Deaf to the magic of the mermaid's songs,
The minor music of the surge she hears:
The roar of Neptune, the wind's thousand tongues
And shrieks of drowning men; yet, guarded ears
Send up no message to the stony eyes,
That stare across the waves in blank repose.
Tho' sun-kiss'd sails and dreary shipwrecks rise
And fall by turns, dumbly she sits. She knows
Just where in ocean's bed the lost crew sleeps,
Yet, mutely cold, the sphinx her secret keeps.

THE GIFT FROM HEAVEN

The fairies cluster'd round a cradle bed,
Wherein a newborn girl had just been laid.

Each to the babe ('neath wing of rainbow sheen),
Bearing some birthgift from the Elfin Queen.

One gave her intellect; another wealth;
Beauty, a third; a fourth, unbroken health;

Accomplishments and graces by the score
Were shower'd on her by a dozen more.

What time the elves join'd hands (a radiant ring!)
And round the cradle 'gan to dance and sing;

Sudden an Angel in their midst descending,
Cried in a voice, reproach and pity blending:

“Your tasks, poor fays, ye do but half fulfil;
A woman's crowning grace is wanting still!

“Lo!” and he cast a veil of filmy lace
Over the lovely babe's unconscious face;

“Moss for the rose; for pearls, the deep, dark sea,—
A maiden's chiefest charm is *Modesty!*”

THE DEATH BRINGERS

They rise from river, marsh, and bay,
From wooded dell and dingle gray:
In floating, filmy robes arrayed,
With vapory tresses, dank, displayed —
A troop of witches, full as weird
As that which Tam O'Shanter speered
Near Alloway's kirk . . . "Who may ye be?"
With one accord, they answer me,
In slumberous tones, reply to me:
"Malaria!"

The foremost nymph — a thing of air —
Between her ghostly hands doth bear
A chalice green. From out the cup
A deadly poison bubbles up
To doom the wight whose dreaming lip
That demon draught shall dare to sip;
For, spell of Lethe in it lies
To weight with death his glazing eyes,
And ye shall claim him for your prize,
Malaria!

O sprites of wood and water dun,
Begot of wedded slime and sun!
These gorgeous garlands, all your own,
Were surely in Gehenna grown:
The nightshade's poison-dripping bell,
(Whose deadly seed was sown in hell!)
Upas, whose blistering dew impearls
The fillet of your floating curls,
All breathe your name from out their whorls,
"Malaria!"

Avaunt, accursèd, airy things!
Destruction freights your rainbow wings;
Your serpent eyes allure to death;
Contagion's in your fetid breath.
O treacherous foes! O witching faces!
O close and passionate embraces!
Your arms our darlings die within,
Behind your flowers the crossbones grin —
Fair are ye all, yet foul as Sin,
Malaria!

ADVERSITY'S SCALES

Children of fame and fortune fair,
Bright-eyed darlings of peace and plenty!
Check for awhile the rush and glare
Of your chariot wheels — *Festina lente!*

Here are the Scales of Adversity
Iron on one side, gold on the other;
Fling in your favors gay, and see
Who is a friend and a trusty brother.

Fling in many a handful brave,
Beautiful friendships shining brightly:
Day dreams sweet as a heart could crave —
Who would think that they weighed so lightly!

Who would think till the trick were tried,
What airy nothings are love and gladness?
Alas! the weights on the other side
Are want and wrong and shame and sadness!

Springs to the beam the balance free,
Memories false or fickle flaunting —
Oh, for a heart that Adversity
Might weigh in her scales and not find wanting!

THE POET'S PLEA

We ask not for statues of marble or brass,
We crave not a niche in the temple of Fame;
Well know we that naught is so ready to pass
As the glory and glint of a name.

The boon we affection is something that lasts
When the meed of the sculptor and artist departs:
Poor bards tho' we be, wand'ring minstrels, out-
casts,
Let us live in your warm loving hearts!

Let us live by our songs, simple lyrics, yet sweet
As the lay of the linnet when violets blow;
Simple lyrics, yet sad as, in sylvan retreat,
The whip-poor-will's, tender and low,

Bringing whispers from heaven, thro' crystalline air,
To hallow the echoes of earth's dusty marts:
Shedding exquisite balm from the presses of Prayer,
On bleeding and sorrow-wrung hearts.

Let us live in those hearts — ever waking their
strings
To the love of Beautiful, Noble, and True;
The soul mounts aloft as the good poet sings
Of truths ever old, ever new,

Mounts aloft thro' earth's mists to those mansions
of bliss,

Whence the Muse of true poesy never departs;
To God be the glory! Men, grant us but this —
To live evermore in your hearts!

ALCIPHRON'S LAMENT

(On the death day of Alethe, A.D. 257)

Mine was a lily fairer far
Than all the lilies of old Egypt's land;
More fragrant in its virgin bloom than are
The sweetest lilies of the Nile's rich strand.

In dark nights growing,
In scant lights blowing,
Love marvel'd how its petals could expand.

For in the crevice of a stone
It burgeon'd from the prison of my heart;
And to myself I said: "When death alone,
Grim Gaoler, comes to wrench these bars apart,
Blest be his power
If my little flower
Bloom but that hour to cheer my sinking heart!"

Behold! Alas, the Gaoler came
To-day! Death came, but not to break my bars.
The Angel with the hollow eyes of flame,
Relentless stole my lily thro' the bars;
And I despairing,
Thro' my window glaring,
See its white Splendor dimming all the stars!

THE RIDER OF THE WHITE HORSE

And behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him
was called Faithful and True.—Apoc. xix.

Well did the seer, of the false abhorrent,
Fathom the depths of the soul's fierce thirst,
When, from his lips, like the rush of a torrent,
The name of the heavenly Rider burst!

Faithful and True! The sick heart, broken
And bruis'd and bleeding, its trust betrayed,
Finds in that Name a bliss unspoken,
A balm for the wounds by traitors made.

Moaning it cries in its crucial anguish,
In the deep despair of its crushing doubt:
"Hasten, O Lord, I sink, I languish!
From the depths of this darkness draw me out!"

And lo! while the clouds grow denser, wider,
Folding in shadows the soul oppress'd,
The White Horse comes with its radiant Rider,
Faithful and True — its Rider blest!

Under the blaze of His eyes' clear splendor,
Melteth the darkness, born of earth;
Under the touch of His hand so tender,
Light and life have rapturous birth!

And, safe in His arms, all glad and grateful,
The soul cries out to its Lord anew:
"Oh! Thou, my Jesus, alone art faithful,
Thou, my Jesus, alone art true!"

SOCRATES

Against the darkness of a heathen age,
Like whitest cameo, contrasting set
Upon a velvet panel black as jet
Shines forth the mem'ry of this deathless sage.
He knew not Christ, yet seems his life a page
Of almost Christian truth and selflessness —
Yea, Christian continence. 'Twas his to wage
'Gainst pagan vice a warfare saints might bless.

His, too, Athenian youth it was to mold
To highest archetypes. Good Socrates!
Thy zeal were welcome here. The young, the old
Might emulate thy selfless ministries;
Might learn this axiom from thy Daemon odd:
"The voice of Conscience is the voice of God!"

MOSQUITO SONG AT THE SHORE

We gather here at the gates of the wind,
Two hundred trillions strong;
At the warm, wet gates of the Western wind,
Humming our slumb'rous song,
We wait till the warder turns the key,
And we enter the borderlands of the sea.

But the north wind blows from the land of snows,
The east from the billows gray:
The south wind faints in the heart of the rose,
And the west seems far away;
The chill rain beats upon dune and fen:
We dare not enter the haunts of men.

For our wings are fashion'd of daintiest lace,
Our robes of a filmy sheen;
Our striped hose have an airy grace:
But the lance we bear is keen;
It pierces our foes with its poison'd tine,
And we drink their blood, like the rich, red wine.

Blaze forth, O sun! from your prison of cloud,
Till the marshes reek with steam!
Ho! wind of the West, sing sweet and loud,
And open the gates of our dream;
And in we'll rush — tra-la! tra-lee!
To ravage the borderlands of the sea!

FLOWER MIRACLES

Mock ye at miracles? Behold these seeds,
These tiny dusky spheres, scentless and dull!
I drop them in the virgin soil, and pull
A veil of earth across them. Pluck the weeds,
And water the dry loam. Thence, there proceeds
No hint of bloom or fragrance. All is dull
And scentless as the fresh-sown, soulless seeds.
But hither come in June. How beautiful
The radiant flowers bloom! God's chemistry
Hath drawn from dusky seed and sullen clay
Rarest of colors, scents of Araby —
A fragrant vision fairer than the day!
Bow down, proud heart, and own the gracious
Power
That works a miracle in every flower.

ANNE BOLEYN IN THE TOWER

Who can take up the tangled, tarnish'd skein,
Broken in tears and pain —
Who, taking up, can make it whole and bright
again?

Who can restore the pollen to the rose,
Rifled by reckless foes?
Who can replace that treasure in its chaste repose?

Who can awake the cithern's tuneless strings?
O lax and rusted strings!
Who can awake your old-time dulcet murmurings?

Who can refill the lily's cup with dew,
Crush'd in yon bed of rue?
Say, who can fill that stain'd and shatter'd vase
anew?

O my sad life! O tangled, broken skein!
O harp and flow'ret vain!
Who, who can make ye whole and fresh and clean
again?

Sweet Christ, that hangest on the cruel Tree!
In pity succor me!
Blot out my sins and failures — heal my misery!

Here cut, here burn — but spare my wretched soul!
Oh! make it pure and whole,
That it may endless praise Thy mercy's blessed
dole!

INGRATITUDE

She found a serpent in the frosty road,
Crush'd by a passing wain;
(Sweet child!) she bore it to her bright abode,
Benumb'd by cold and pain.

The wounds anointed on its ashen coat,
(Torn by the cruel tire!),
She loos'd the silken kerchief from her throat,
And happ'd it by the fire.

"Poor, pretty pet!" she said, "thou'rt sorely
bruised.

O creature of the King!
I pity thee" (she said), then, tender, mused,
And drowsy grew, young thing!

But while she slept unguarded in her chair,
The reptile, comforted
By healing unguents, crept from out its lair,
And reared its treach'rous head.

Then, twined the sleeper's arm — a hideous band!
"I pity thee," she sighed;
But, ere she woke it stung her in the hand,
And just at dawn she died.

THE THINGS OF GOD

Hearken to the King of kings:
"Wouldst thou do no wrong?
Render unto God the things
That to God belong:
Glory, Judgment, and Revenge —
These to Me belong!

“Glory? Naught of pride should lurk
In thy flow’ring ways:
Naught of self or Satan lurk
In thy fruitful days.
Unto man, the willing work,
Unto God, the praise.

“Judgment? Who art thou, indeed,
Judging free and foul?
Only One alone can read
Secrets of the soul.
To the Judge, the judgment cede,
He will right the whole.

“Vengeance?” saith the Lord: “’Tis Mine;
My behests obey;
Unto Me thy cause resign—
Kneel, forgive, and pray.
Glory, Judgment, and Revenge —
These are Mine for aye!”

PER DOMINUM NOSTRUM JESUM CHRISTUM

Tremendous words, epitome of prayer!
Flooding the soul with undeservèd grace:
As tho’ we wore the Master’s robe, and dared
To gaze upon His Father face to face.
Each Collect that the vested priest intones
Runs like a river to the same vast sea:
“Father, we have no merits of our own,
But thro’ Thy Son we beg all things of Thee!”

Sadden'd by sin, by holy awe deterr'd,
We kneel afar and search our shrinking hearts,
When from the altar float those charmèd words,
And hope grows strong, and every doubt departs.
Glad music from our grateful tongues resounds,
Sweet tears bedew our dry and burning eyes;
Ladder of light! we grasp thy golden rounds,
And by Thee mount rejoicing to the skies.

A NORTHERN MAY

The robe of lace that decks her slender form
Is donn'd too early for the vernal feast;
Her cheek is pale, and on her bosom warm
A wind is blowing from the bleak northeast.

In futile search for downy shelter there,
Her shiv'ring arms upon her breast are cross'd;
The airy veil above her golden hair
Is all ablaze with diamonds of frost.

Now from her hands a wreath of daisies slips
And at her feet in blighted beauty lies;
The smile is frozen on her lovely lips,
An icy terror dims her dewy eyes.

Turn back, sweet May! turn back, and warm thy
wings
In Time's old cave, at Winter's funeral pyre,
And come not forth till Earth, thy bridegroom
springs
To clasp thee glowing to his heart of fire!

NOTHING MORE

King or Kaiser, chief and lord,
Strong of arm, or quick of brain;
Master of the pen or sword,
Ruler of a world's domain, —
Tho' thy name be borne abroad
Like wing'd seed, from shore to shore,
What thou art before thy God,
That thou art, and nothing more!

Men may bless thee, men may praise,
Hail thee hero, sage, or saint;
All the bards may chant thy lays, —
Artists all thy beauties paint.
Serfs may tremble at thy nod,
Fawning cringe about thy door;
What thou art before thy God,
That thou art, and nothing more!

Soon shall pass Fame's gilded smoke,
Wild applause, base flattery;
Falsehood, shamed, shall drop its cloak,
Facing Truth's eternity.
Ere the spirit spurns the clod,
Stern its cry at Death's dark door,
"What thou art before thy God,
That thou art, and nothing more!"

A MODERN JOB

I lost my fortune. By one sudden stroke,
Gold, land, and goods, — mine all — were swept
away.
At early dawn a millionaire I woke,
And slept a beggar at the close of day.

I lost my friends. On fortune's heels they fled,
The merry, fickle throng that filled my halls
They drank my wine, they ate my whitest bread,
Then ran like rodents from my tott'ring walls.

But when I sat alone at fireless hearth,
There came a stranger Guest and sat by me;
Fair was His face with beauty not of earth,
His grave eyes beamed upon me tenderly.

"Now, thou art wholly Mine," He gently said,
"Canst share, O son! thy Master's grief and
shame?"

"The Lord hath given!" was all I answerèd:
"The Lord hath taken. Blessed be His name!"

THE VESTAL

Friendship is not a Cupid, rosy, soft,
Sporting on rainbow wings of gay caprice:
But a pure vestal, grave in patient peace
And wingless constancy. Mayhap, full oft,
While thro' this life she goes — eyes, heart aloft —
She may be sternly tested, misconstrued,
Her words misjudged, her noble motives scoff'd
To scorn — her ways (alas!) misunderstood.

Yet bears she all, longsuffering, resigned,
True to her mission because true to God;
Steadfast and selfless, fares she, strong and kind,
Covering her clients with her mantle broad,
And healing all their wounds with balmlike kiss;
O Love Divine, Thy friendship's like to this!

LULLABY

Sleep — sleep — sleep!
The moon shines brightly;
The yellow stars begin to peep:
The early dew falls lightly.
The lazy, crazy croon
Of crickets 'neath the moon,
Is mixing with the tree-frogs' drowsy, tender
tune —
Hush, baby, hush!

Rest — rest — rest!
Little sister's dreaming,
Cuddled in her snowy nest,
Flaxen hair loose streaming;
Moonlight on the floor
Is tracing o'er and o'er
The vine leaves, the vine leaves, that tremble
at the door.
Hush, baby, hush!

Sleep — sleep — sleep!
The white cat's purring:
The little mice have ceas'd to *cheep*
Behind the wainscot stirring.
Th' pet canary closes
Its jewel'd eye and dozes
In its cage of golden filigree among the slum-
bering roses.
Hush, baby, hush!

Rest — rest — rest!
Evening bells are chiding;
Daisies in the meadow's breast,
Fast asleep are hiding;
Cradled near the wall,
The lilies rise and fall:
And thou'rt yet awake, sweetheart, the
 fairest flow'r of all!
Sleep, baby, sleep!

DRUSILLA'S ANSWER

A rich voice, mellow'd as by frost,
Was singing in the outer hall;
Thro' my dim room the words were toss'd:
 “ 'Tis better to have lov'd and lost,
 Than never to have lov'd at all! ”

Upon my knee, with cheek of snow,
Drusilla bow'd her golden head;
I watch'd her color come and go, —
“The lov'd, the lost?” I murmur'd low,
 “What means it?” — “Lost by death,” she said.

“Why but by death?” “Life hath its cross,”
Sighed she; “true hearts, like gold, are proved;
But while Deceit and Change are dross,
If Wrong, not Death, should work Love's loss,
 'Twere better never to have loved!”

JEALOUSY

A monster, this, with green, distorted face,
In shape half cerberus, half cockatrice;
'Neath black, o'erhanging brows and furtive eyes,
Her foul lips drool dishonor and disgrace.
Anon, she gnaweth with a fierce grimace,
Her clawlike nails, even as evermore,
Her heart is gnawed by doubts, suspicions base
Tearing her burning vitals to the core.

No peace on earth, no joy in heaven are hers;
Another's good her ill must ever be.
Her blood is gall; her hate, like Lucifer's,
Blasts gay success with hopeless misery.
O cobra, hiding 'neath thy venomhood!
Is thine eye evil because God is good?

THE SERMON OF THE FLOWERS

Hast read the holy fragrant text
Which Nature hath ordained that each
Of these, her own anointed, teach
To hearts forlorn and spirits vexed?

Many a cruel word or thought
Drops thro' a sieve of newblown roses,
And straightway, in their sweetness loses
The bitterness from malice caught.

Many a man goes past yon park
With soul matured and ripe for sin;
The wind grows gentle in its din,
The moon rides calmly thro' the dark;

But not a thought of peace or pardon
Breaks thro' his spirit's callous crust,
Till yonder gate is backward thrust,
And down he paces to the garden.

Stay not his steps among those blooms!
Leave him to go, quiet and slow,
On, thro' the shadow'd paths, below,
Rich with a thousand rare perfumes.

Leave him to drink with fever'd lips
The fresh breath of the sleeping flowers
All drench'd with summer's diamond showers,
All veil'd with twilight's soft eclipse.

Leave him to dream the olden dreams
Of Adam in his Paradise:
("The grand old gardener," whose eyes
First ponder'd Nature's healthful schemes):

And, going, drinking, dreaming there,
His eyes with timely tears shall dim,
His soul within his breast shall swim,
His lips grow tender with a prayer!

And all his after-walks with men
Shall steal a freshness from those hours
When first he searched the Book of Flowers,
And found the peace of God therein.

RETROSPECTION

The roads without are bare in winter chillness,
Over the window waves the ghostly birch,
The moonlight glimmers thro' the chamber's still-
ness,
Pure as the chancel-light of some old church.

No footsteps come, irresolute or certain,
Up the dark stairway, thro' the corridor;
Only the mice behind the hanging curtain,
Nibble the silken fringe that sweeps the floor.

And cheat me with the thought that some fair lady
Or noble lord from yonder pictur'd suite,
Goes pacing, pacing thro' the recess shady,
With rustling robes, dim eyes, and solemn feet.

The hour is full of retrospective sweetness;
Old memories, like roses in the snow,
From out the past, in all their ripe completeness,
Upon the icy breast of winter glow.

As men who sail at night past tropic islands,
See not their shores, but breathe their fragrance
in,
So, in these shadows, sailing thro' the silence,
My soul breathes balm, and owns the isles unseen;

The dewy, blushing isles of recollection,
Where olden forms and faces star the night;
And castles of mine own unskill'd erection
Lift up their airy turrets to the light;

Where fountains splash, and birds on shining pinions
Go singing till the day is dead and dumb;
Where snow and frost ne'er touch the gay domin-
ions,
And happy hopes to happier harvest come!

O Time! grim pilot on a sea mysterious,
Slowly we leave these breezy realms and bright;
Slowly thy crew forever sad and serious,
Forever murmur of some lost delight;

Some broken idol, frail as alabaster,
Some fav'rite pinnacle in the offing wreck'd;
All have some relic of unkind disaster,
Which mortal skill can never more perfect.

And, with a chant as mournful as the dirges
That solemn choirs intone above the dead,
The sails droop down the lone, unlighted surges,
And asking hearts pulse on unanswered.

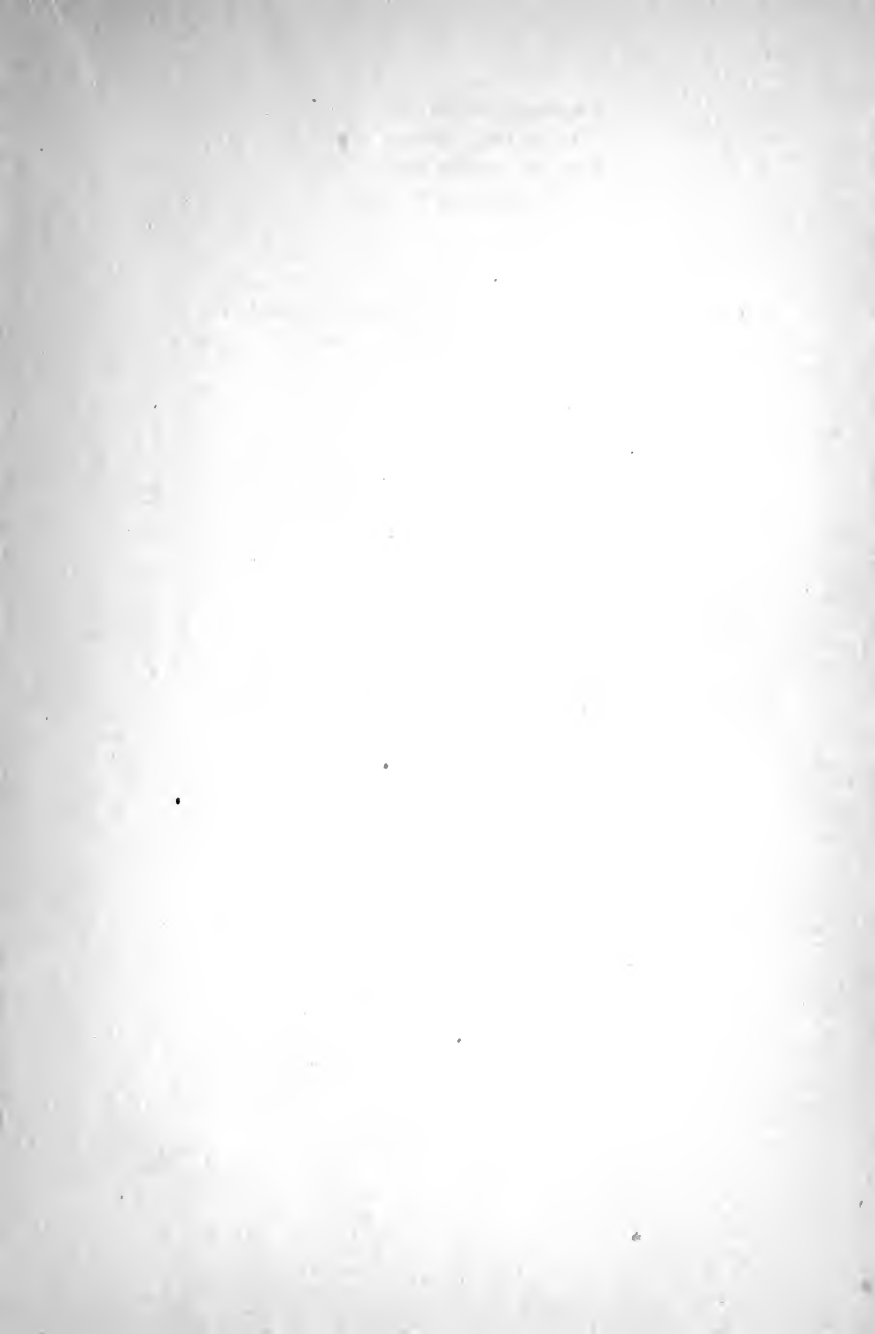
“RING OUT THE OLD — RING IN THE NEW!”

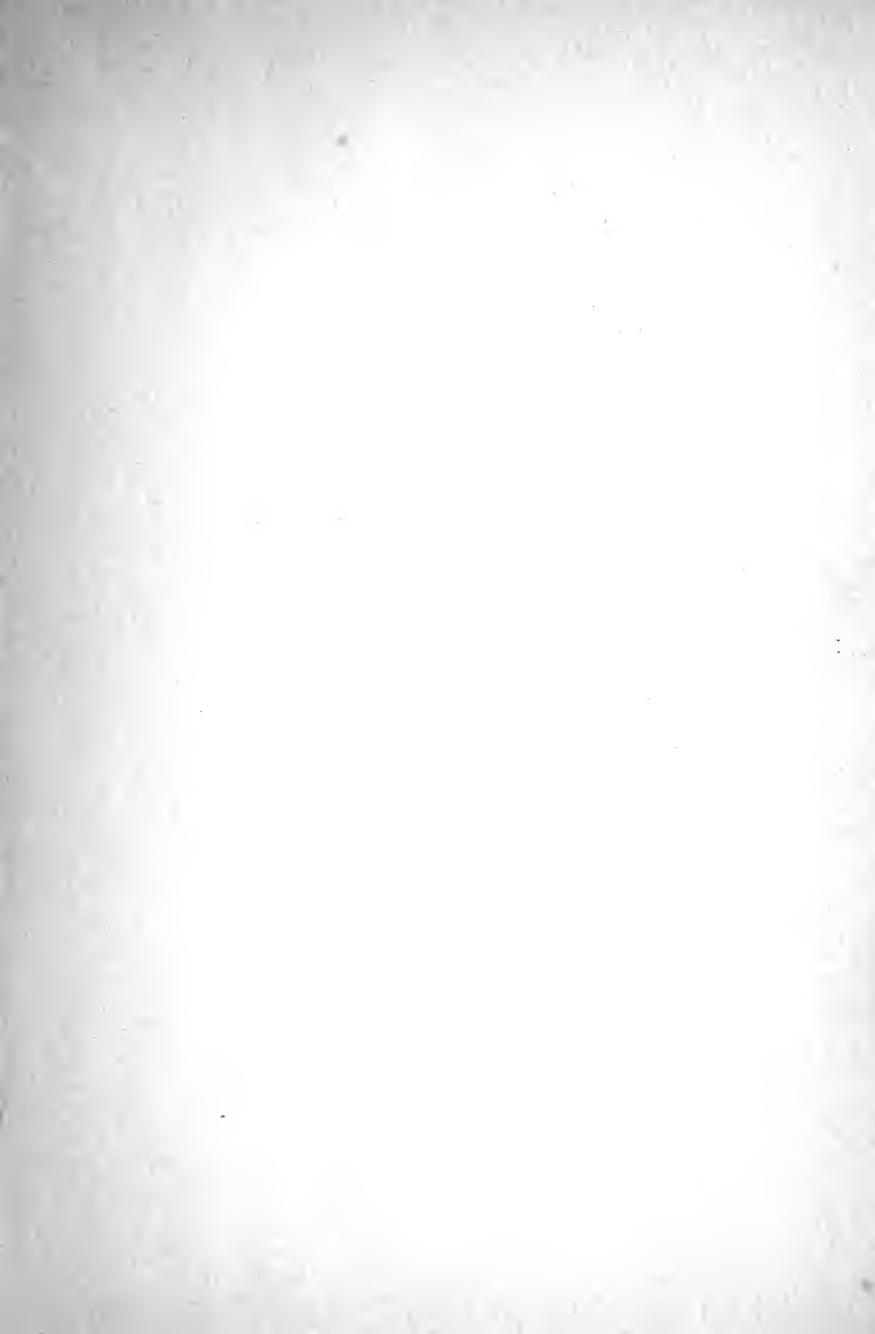
The night hath waned;
The chimes have rung.
The cup is drained,
The song is sung.

The harp is hush'd,
The viol still;
Where roses blush'd,
The snows lie chill.

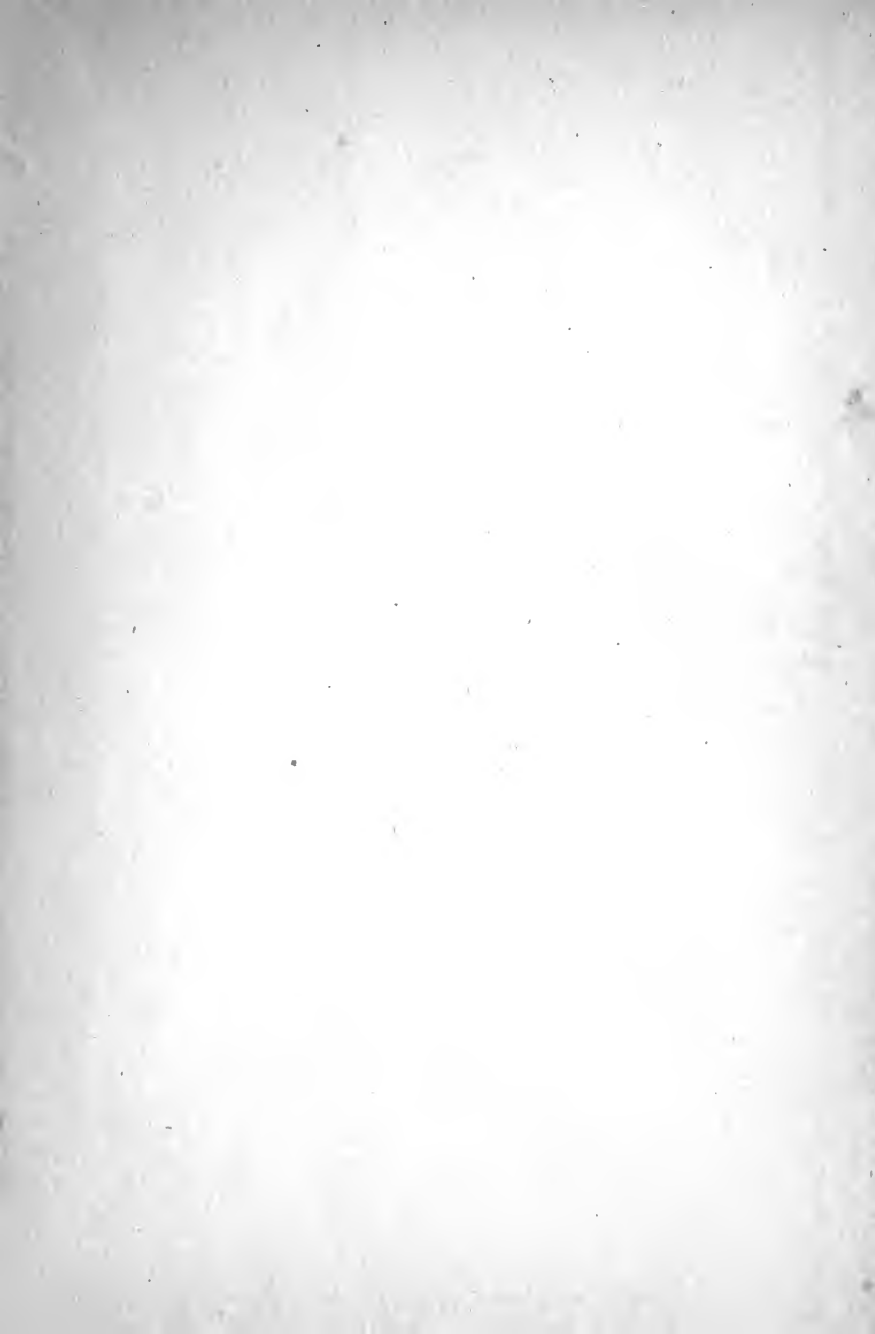
The story's told —
Is that the dawn?
The fire grows cold,
The guests are gone.

The book is read:
A new one bring.
The King is dead —
Long live the King!

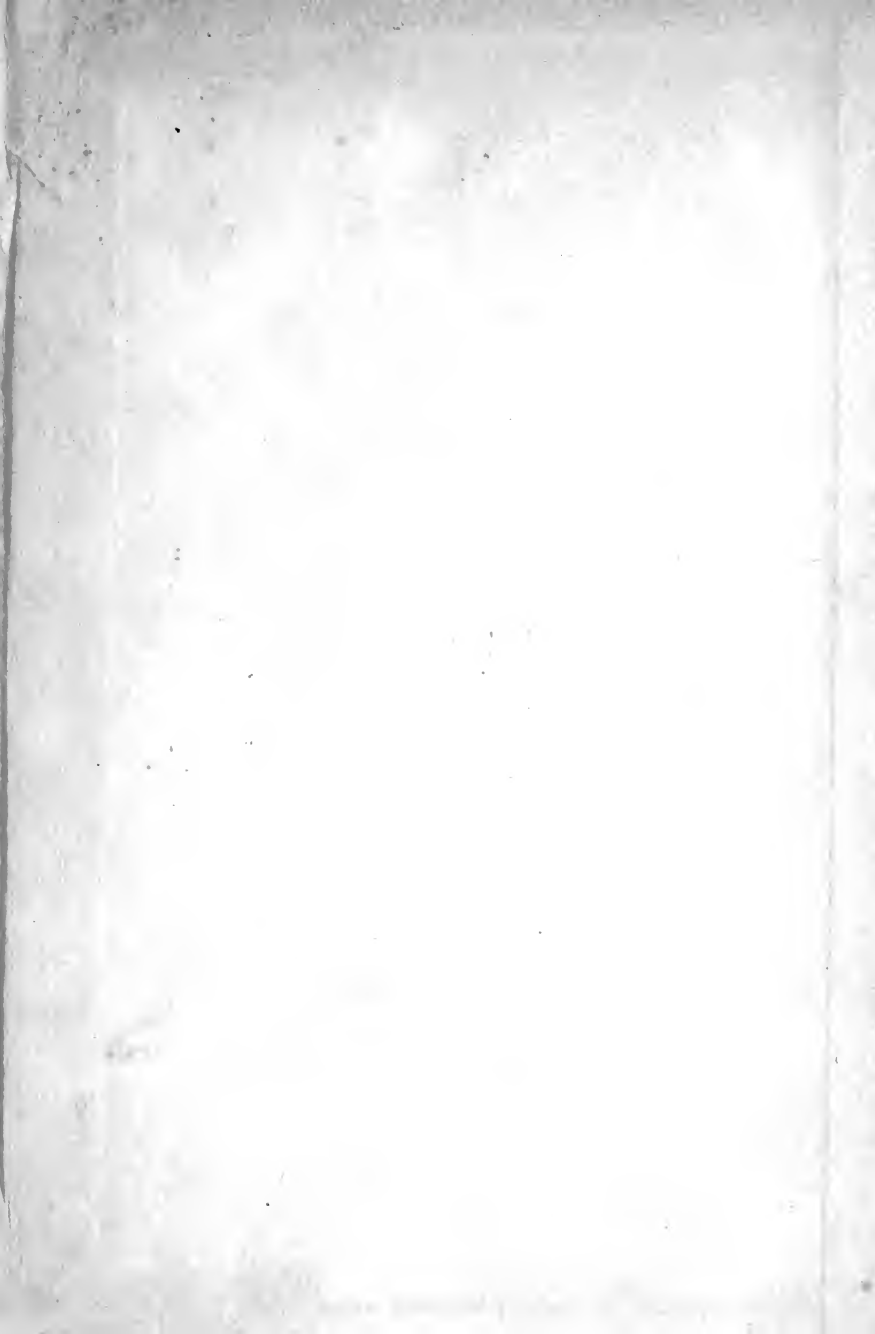








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